

HIST 387: The Global History of Soccer

Spring 2022

Dr. Daniel Richter

drichter@gmu.edu

Office Hours: Gladly by appointment through Zoom.

Course Description:

Soccer, more widely known as football, is the most popular sport in the modern world and arguably more important than any form of organized religion for many fans of club and national teams. In the course, football and soccer will be used interchangeably while accounting that only in the United States is the sport primarily known as soccer. This course explores how and why global football has influenced and been influenced by politics, economic, and cultural relationships. The course focuses on the transnational history of football, with an emphasis on players and managers such as Pelé and Diego Maradona as global figures who have impacted local cultures in numerous locations during their careers. During the semester, we will cover the intertwined histories of the sport in Europe, Latin America, the United States, Africa, and Asia. The course also follows a thematic approach while examining topics such as the politics and development of football clubs, the World Cup and other international competitions, and the racialized and gendered spheres of playing and spectatorship. Students will read monographs, articles, and study audio-visual sources about the history and culture of the game.

Given the challenges of remote learning, the course lectures will be delivered asynchronously with discussion meetings on Tuesdays during the semester after the first week of the course. In the course's lectures, we will move chronologically and thematically through the history of soccer in the 20th and 21st centuries. There will also be the viewing of YouTube videos and numerous documentaries that show soccer being played by its greatest practitioners. We will also watch various films including *The Miracle of Bern* to understand the significance of the 1954 World Cup for West Germany and *The 99ers* to understand the 1999 Women's World Cup. For the synthesis of your listening, viewing, and reading, everyone must participate in an online message board by writing ten online responses during the course.

The course paper can be chosen between two options. The first option is to write a 4 to 6 page-length analytical biography of a national team that either qualified or aimed to qualify for the 2022 World Cup in Qatar or a Woman's National Team that sought to qualify for the most recent World Cup. However, you may not write about the United States while almost every other national team is fair game. Your paper will be an in-depth study of the history of a national team that you will work on throughout the course. Even if you choose to write the

second paper about Latin America discussed below, you need to submit a paper proposal that lists four teams that you are interested in writing about and identifies at least four primary and secondary sources for each team that will use to help you with your research. After reviewing everyone's submissions, I will assign everyone a team. Some people may wind up writing about the same team, but the aim is to have a wide array of teams covered and that you can have access to printed and online sources through GMU. I would ask that everyone try to visit the GMU Library at least once or twice during the course. If that is not possible, please let me know and we can work out alternative solutions.

The main goals for your first paper is to analyze the topic in terms of politics and historical importance and you will be required to use primary and secondary sources. The recommended primary sources will be British and American newspapers such as *The Guardian*, *The Times of London*, and *The New York Times* and online magazines such as *Sports Illustrated* and *These Football Times*. For example, if you opt to write about the Hungarian national team, you will read about the team's great successes of the 1950s and its continued struggle to recapture its storied past. You can write about Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Croatia (yes, this list was recently revised), England, France, Germany, Hungary, Mexico, Serbia, Spain, Uruguay, or another team. However, I will work with you to make sure that there are enough English-language sources to write the paper effectively. You will also consult and draw on previous scholarship, but it is a requirement to write an original contribution. If you copy other sources or use them without proper attribution, this practice can be considered plagiarism.

The second paper is an analysis of soccer/fútbol in Latin America and how historians, journalists, and filmmakers have analyzed the sport as an important aspect of popular culture and national identity. You will be required to draw on our course readings to write a 5 to 6 page-length essay that explores how and why club and national team football has gained deep meaning in different countries throughout Latin America with a focus in the late 20th and early 21st century.

The midterm and final exam will include identifications of major historical actors in the history of soccer as well as identifying important terms and writing a synthetic essay.

For the online discussion board, you will be required to write ten weekly responses during the course but must respond to the first four prompts. There will be about 14 prompts in total. For the responses, I will post a new prompt by each Thursday and then you will have to write two to three robust paragraphs about the topic due by the following Tuesday. These ten online responses are meant to be reaction pieces, but require you to pay attention to spelling, grammar, accuracy, and answering the question that is asked while directly engaging with the course material. You should write your online responses to engage with material from the lectures, readings, and viewings.

Required Texts

Joshua Nadel, *Fútbol!: Why Soccer Matters in Latin America* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2014)

Sid Lowe, *Fear and Loathing in La Liga: Barcelona, Real Madrid, and the World's Greatest Sports Rivalry* (New York: Nation Books, 2014)

Laurent Dubois, *Soccer Empire: The World Cup and the Future of France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010)

All the other readings will all be available on Blackboard. Please check Blackboard regularly for updates.

Course Requirements and Assessment

Every assignment will count towards your final grade so it is crucial to prepare properly and consistently for every class session. Like a soccer season, this seminar is a marathon and not a sprint.

Final grades will be determined as follows:

Analytical Biography Proposal (Required): 5%

Online Message Board: 20%

Midterm: 25%

Paper: 20%

Final Exam: 25%

Class Schedule

Week One (Zoom Meeting on 1/25): Introduction and Course Overview

Readings:

Simon Kuper, "The Global Game," *Harpers Magazine* (July 2014), <http://harpers.org/archive/2014/07/the-global-game/> (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.)

Laurent Dubois, "Stade de France- A History in Fragments", <http://africasacountry.com/2015/11/the-stade-de-france-a-history-in-fragments/> (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.)

Diego Forlan, "Cricket, Sacred Cows, and Life in India," *The National*, October 7, 2016, <http://www.thenational.ae/sport/football/diego-forlan-cricket-sacred-cows-and-life-in-india--football-has-huge-potential-here> (Links to an external site) (Links to an external site.).

Romelu Lukaku, "I've Got Some Things to Day," *The Players Tribune*, June 18, 2018, <https://www.theplayertribune.com/en-us/articles/romelu-lukaku-ive-got-some-things-to-say> (Links to an external site.)

Jenny Vrentas, "2019 Sports person of the Year: Megan Rapinoe," December 9, 2019, <https://www.si.com/sportsperson/2019/12/09/megan-rapinoe-2019-sportsperson-of-the-year> (Links to an external site.).

Week Two (2/1: The Global Evolution of Soccer from Ancient Games to the 19th Century/ Early Football in Latin America

Readings:

Matthew B. Karush, "National Identity in the Sports Pages: Football and the Mass Media in 1920s Buenos Aires," *The Americas*, Vol. 60, No. 1 (July 2003), 11-32.

Joshua Nadel, "Introduction and Chapter One," in Fútbol! *Why Soccer Matters in Latin America*.

Week Three (Zoom Meeting on 2/8): Early Soccer in the United States/Football and Fascism in Italy and Germany

Readings:

David Wangerin, "A Game of its Own: America's Path to Football Isolation" and "Tangled Roots" in Wangerin, *Soccer in a Football World: The Story of America's Forgotten Game* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2008)

Recommended:

Jonathan Wilson, "Sindelar: the ballad of the tragic hero," *The Guardian*, April 3, 2007. <https://www.theguardian.com/football/2007/apr/03/sport.comment3> (Links to an external site.)

Week Four (2/15) Football and the Spanish Civil War/Football, Communism, and the Iron Curtain

Sid Lowe, Fear and Loathing in La Liga, 1-80.

Robert Edelman, "A Small Way of Saying "No": Moscow Working Men, Spartak Soccer, and the Communist Party, 1900-1945," *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 107, No. 5. (Dec. 2002), 1441-1474.

Week Five (Zoom Meeting on 2/22): The 1950 and 1954 World Cups/ Cold War Football in the 1950s and 1960s

Readings:

Lowe, *Fear and Loathing in La Liga*, 81-179.

Brian Glanville, May 20, 2002 "Ladislao Kubala,"

<https://www.theguardian.com/news/2002/may/21/guardianobituaries.brianglanville>

Jonathan Wilson, "Best, Beckenbauer, Platini, Zidane: Puskas topped them all," *The Guardian*, November 17,

2006, <https://www.theguardian.com/football/2006/nov/17/sport.comment2>

Viewing: *The Miracle of Bern*, available " <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wQLKpgAmWQ>

Week Six (Zoom Meeting on 3/1): The Rise of Pele/The 1966 World Cup

Viewing: *Gods of Brazil*, available at :[BBC Storyville 2002 Gods Of Brazil Pele And Garrincha \(Links to an external site.\) \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

Readings:

Joshua Nadel, "Nuestra and Futbol Arte: National Styles" in Nadel, *Fútbol!: Why Soccer Matters in Latin America*, 42-81.

Ana Paula da Silva, "Pelé, racial discourse and the 1958 World Cup," *Soccer & Society*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (2014), 36-47.

Tony Mason, "The Reign of Pelé," in Mason, *The Passion of the People*.

Recommended:

Mason, "England 1966: Tradition or Modern" in Alan Tomlinson, ed., *National Identity and Global Sports Events: Culture, Politics and Spectacle in the Olympics and the Football World Cup* (New York: SUNY Press, 2006), 83-98.

The Myth of Garrincha, available at: <https://vimeo.com/143806499> (Links to an external site.)

Week Seven (3/8) The Soccer War and Latin American Nationalism/Midterm

Readings:

Ryszard Kapuscinski, "The Soccer War," available on ELMS.

Michael McKnight, "Soccer. War. Nothing More," *Sports Illustrated*, June 3, 2019. <https://www.si.com/soccer/2019/06/03/football-war-honduras-el-salvador> (Links to an external site.)

Eduardo Archetti, "Argentina 1978, Military Nationalism, Football Essentialism, and Moral Ambivalence," in Alan Tomlinson and Christopher Young, *National Identity and Global Sports Events: Culture, Politics, and Spectacle in the Olympics and the Football World Cup*.

AND

Joshua Nadel, "Y va a caer: Soccer and Politics in Chile," in Nadel, *Fútbol: Why Soccer Matters in Latin America*

Recommended:

Moara Passoni, "Corinthian Democracy: How Sócrates and his teammates offered a model of governance and why it ended," *The Blizzard*, September 11, 2020, <https://www.theblizzard.co.uk/article/corinthian-democracy> (Links to an external site.)

Week Eight (No Class for Spring Break)

Week Nine (Zoom Meeting on 3/22): Politics and Soccer in the 1970s/The Rise and Fall of the NASL

Reading:

Fernando Delgado, "Flawed heroes and great talents: The challenges associated with framing soccer legends in the NASL," *Soccer & Society* 15, 780-793.

Lowe, *Fear and Loathing in La Liga*, 224-252.

Viewing:

Once in a Lifetime: The Story of the New York Cosmos, available for rent from Vudu.

Week Nine (Zoom Meeting on 3/29): The Inimitable Life of Diego Armando Maradona /The 1994 World Cup and the Birth of Major League Soccer

Readings: Eduardo Archetti, "The Spectacle of a Heroic Life: The case of Diego Maradona," available on ELMS and Joshua Nadel, "The Unfulfilled Promise of Mexico" in *Fútbol: Why Soccer Matters in Latin America*

Barry Glendening, *The Guardian*, "Andres Escobar's deadly own goal," March 25, 2014 <https://www.theguardian.com/football/blog/2014/mar/25/world-cup-moments-andres-escobar-death> (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.)

Fernando Delgado, "Major League Soccer: The Return of the Foreign Sport," *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* (Vol. 21), 287-299.

Viewing:

The Two Escobars

Week Ten (4/5) Stadiums, Football Fans, and Tragedy/Football and Politics in Post-Communist Europe

Readings:

Selection from Bill Buford, *Among the Thugs*.

Franklin Foer, "How Soccer Explains the Gangster's Paradise," in Foer, *How Soccer Explains the World* (New York: HarperCollins, 2004), 7-34.

Viewing: *30 for 30: Hillsborough*, available online:

<https://archive.org/details/30.for.30.Soccer.Stories.S01E01.Hillsborough.720p.HDTV.x264BA/LLS> (Links to an external site.)

Week 11 (Zoom Meeting on 4/12): The 1998 World Cup/ Football Migration and Globalization

Readings:

- Laurent Dubois, *Soccer Empire*, All.

- Matthew Taylor, "Global Players? Football, Migration and Globalization, c. 1930-2000," *Historical Social Research / Historische Sozialforschung*, Vol. 31, No. 1 (115), *Football History: International Perspectives / Fußball-Geschichte: Internationale Perspektiven* (2006), 7-30.

Week 12 (Zoom Meeting on 4/19) The Global History of Women's Soccer/Asia's World Cup

Reading:

- Nadel, "Left Out: Women's Soccer in Latin America," in Nadel, *Fútbol*

- Soon-Hee Hwang, "Korea and Japan 2002: Public Space and Popular Celebration," in *National Identity and Global Sports Events: Culture, Politics, and Spectacle in the Olympics and the Football World Cup*, edited by Alan Tomlinson and Christopher Young (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005), 215-231.

Viewing:

The 99ers, available at: [Soccer 99'ers \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

Week 13 (4/26): Africa's World Cup/Superclubs and Soccernomics

Readings:

- Peter Alegi, Prologue, Chapters 5 and 6, in Alegi, *African Soccerscapes: How a Continent Changed the World's Game* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2010)
- Lowe, *Fear and Loathing in La Liga*, pp. 348-418.
- Selection from *Soccernomics* by Simon Kuper and Stefan Szymanski.

Course paper due on Wednesday, 4/28.

Week 14 (Zoom Meeting on 5/2): Brazil and the 2014 World Cup/Corruption in the House of FIFA

Readings:

- Roger Kittleson, "Introduction" and "The Business of Winning: Brand Brazil and the New Globalism, 1990-2010" in Kittleson, *The Country of Football: Soccer and The Making of Modern Brazil* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014).
- Sam Borden and Rebecca R. Ruiz, "Sepp Blatter, on Eve of FIFA Election, Is Exiting 'a Happy Man'" *New York Times*, February 25, 2016,
<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/26/sports/soccer/sepp-blatter-fifa-president-election.html> (Links to an external site.)

Viewing:

Diego Maradona, directed by Asif Kapadia

Final Exam TBA.